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Third Place

How should the Catholic Church evangelize in the digital age?

"Okay, just one more video." You say that as that one video turns into multiple ones. Time passes and it's 3 in the morning. Once you realize how late it is you shut off your phone and head to bed. Morning approaches, and you complain about why you didn't sleep earlier. Groaning all day, not even remembering what you watched the night before, and debating what you could have done with that time you wasted. Seems familiar? Well, most people can relate to this scenario, and question themselves about what they could've done during this time. Some Catholics could argue that they should've spent that time with God, but if we can't even look away from the screen or have self-discipline, how are we expected to communicate with God? This is where the Catholic Church should intervene. Every day the Catholic church looks for new ways to spread the word of Jesus, to evangelize areas where Jesus isn't present. So why not the internet? Around 82% of Americans ages 12 and older have social media accounts and spend at least 5 hours daily on the internet. Apps the Catholic church can try to evangelize on, are Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube. These are some of the very well-known apps.

To demonstrate how popular the apps are, take TikTok as an example. Tiktok has been a rapidly growing app since its first launch, with 1 billion active users. Evangelizing on this app is easier than most people would think. It only takes a few minutes to post something positive about God or his Son Jesus Christ. But still, people don't do it. Why? Because they're scared of the backlash they would receive if they posted something about their faith in Jesus Christ. However luckily for them, this isn't the only way you can evangelize in the digital age. Another way you can evangelize would be to share a video with family and friends. Older generations may not know how new technology works or the latest trends. Many of them wouldn't even know what TikTok is. Yet when you go to your grandma's house you find the classic apps on her phone, Candy Crush, Messenger, and Facebook. Or similar apps to these, well it's no shock that older generations prefer less complicated apps to use. A significant factor that may delay evangelization with older generations involving technology may be the decrease in evangelization of older apps and an increase in evangelization of newer ones. So what would be the solution to this issue? As I mentioned before, sharing various videos about Jesus Christ or the Lord. Or even reposting them on different platforms can help evangelize people of all ages.

In addition, different types of content you should try posting on social media or any app could be something that inspired you to try your best to follow Jesus' example that day, or personal moments that you had with Jesus Christ. I can guarantee that someone, somewhere, will see Jesus Christ through the screen, and feel him inside of them. And that's one less person in the world without Jesus Christ, all because you decided to take the time to share or post about him and the Lord. But what if the audience doesn't like the content of Jesus, feels obligated to watch it, or maybe has no interest in it? Then make it interesting! Evangelizing doesn't have to be boring, and because of how advanced technology is nowadays it's very easy to make it appealing to viewers. There are so many possibilities for how to evangelize in the digital age. A few examples of present evangelism in technology would be Jacob Petersen on YouTube. He makes relatable videos regarding his Christian faith in Jesus but also prioritizes the Lord's word on his channel. His content is interactive and funny. Maybe there are a few videos that younger generations would get or videos that only older generations would get. Nevertheless, his community came together with the same goal, to follow Jesus Christ. Jacob's channel is a perfect example of successful evangelism with humor. This proves that evangelism doesn't have to be boring and long. There are no restrictions on the style or form of evangelism.

In conclusion, the Catholic church can use today's tools to spread the Lord's message and convert souls by digitizing the word of Jesus Christ. Apps the church should spread Jesus' word on that I recommend are TikTok, an app for younger audiences, Facebook, an app for older audiences, and YouTube, an app for general audiences. Many styles of content can be used for evangelism, such as music, art, poetry, humor, and many more! So create, share, review, leave a comment on videos, and interact with the videos, but most importantly don't forget about God's words and love for everyone.